

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, and 5-34 are pending in the application. Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 16, and 23 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found, e.g., on page 11, lines 1-5, and in Figures 1, and 6-8. Applicants thank Examiner for indicating that claims 7-9, 14, 15, 18-21, and 26-31 are allowable. In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-6, 10-13, 16-17, 22-25, and 32-34.

Rejections to the Claims

The rejection purports to reject claims 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph on page 7 of the Office Action. However, no such rejection is made within the Office Action and no reasons for such a rejection are given. Applicants, therefore, assume that the Examiner meant to renew the rejection of claims 16 and 17 from the previous Office Action. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 16 was previously rejected because it was unclear to the Examiner where the resilient cantilevers are located. Claim 17 depends from claim 16 and, therefore, was also rejected. The previous response pointed the Examiner to reference number 138 in Figure 7 and to page 11, lines 1-5 in the specification. Applicants have now amended claim 16 to clarify that the resilient cantilevers project from the base of the housing. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is overcome and request allowance of claims 16 and 17.

Claims 22-25 and 32-34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Robinson et al.* (U.S. 5,781,686, hereinafter "*Robinson*"). (While the rejection appears to reject claims 22-25 and 32-34 under 103(a), the rejection is listed under subject heading 35 USC §102. Furthermore, none of the discussions of *Robinson* mention any motivation to modify the reference, but rather argue that *Robinson* shows every element of each claim. Therefore, applicants assume that the Examiner's intent was to renew the rejection of claims 22-25 and 32-34 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 22 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing and a connector holder connected to the housing. The housing includes a first side positioned opposite from a second

side and a peripheral wall that extends between the first and second sides of the housing. The peripheral wall includes a first portion having a first outer face that extends between oppositely positioned first and second edges. The first portion defines a connector access opening that is elongated and that extends longitudinally between the first and second edges of the first outer face. The peripheral wall further includes a second portion having a second outer face separate from the first outer face. The outlet box further includes at least four break-outs provided on the second portion of the peripheral wall. The break-outs on the second portion of the peripheral wall are adapted to form openings in the peripheral wall that face outward from the housing in at least four different directions.

Robinson fails to disclose an outlet box including break-outs facing outward in at least four different directions from the second portion of the peripheral wall. Rather, *Robinson* discloses breakout raceway openings 40 facing in only three directions. See Fig. 1. In particular, *Robinson* discloses an outlet box having a peripheral wall with four sides, each side facing in a different direction. However, one of these sides defines multiple connector module openings. See e.g., col. 8, lines 3-33, and Fig. 1, item numbers 86, 88, 90. Breakout raceway openings 40 are provided in each of the three remaining sides. No motivation is provided in *Robinson* to add another side to the peripheral wall or to add breakout raceway openings 40 to the connector holder side.

In addition, Applicants respectfully point out that col. 5, line 55 of *Robinson* does not disclose break-outs being adapted to form openings in selected sides of the wall. Rather, that section of *Robinson* recites "the cables enter the interior area 38 of the housing 10 through breakout raceway openings 40 in a selected side of the cover 36." Only a single side is selected in this paragraph. Therefore, this paragraph in *Robinson* cannot provide support for modifying *Robinson* to add a break-out facing in a fourth direction in addition to the three disclosed raceway openings 40 in Figure 1. For at least these reasons, *Robinson* does not anticipate or make obvious claim 22.

Claim 23 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing having an elongated connector access opening. The housing also includes a base surface positioned perpendicular relative to the connector access opening. One example of a connector access opening can be seen in Fig. 1, item number 40. The base surface of the housing defines an elongated mounting opening

positioned adjacent the connector access opening. Because the base surface defines the elongated mounting opening, the elongated mounting opening must be perpendicular with respect to the connector access opening. Examples of an elongated mounting opening can be seen in Fig. 1, item numbers 82 and 84. The outlet box further includes a connector holder (*see e.g.*, Fig. 1, item number 36) for holding multiple telecommunications connectors. The connector holder includes a base shaped to fit the mounting opening in the base surface of the housing such that the connector holder can be mounted to the housing.

In contrast, *Robinson* discloses an outlet box including a connector holder forming part of a peripheral wall of a housing of the outlet box. The housing includes a connector access opening 158 and an elongated mounting opening (at) 32. However, *Robinson* fails to disclose or suggest the connector access opening 158 being positioned perpendicular relative to the elongated mounting opening (at) 32. Rather, the connector access opening 158 is coplanar with the elongated mounting opening. *See e.g.*, col. 12, lines 25-30 and Fig. 1. For at least these reasons, therefore, *Robinson* does not anticipate or make obvious claim 23. Claims 24 and 25 depend from claim 23 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 32 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing, means for mounting a connector holder at a first location in the housing, and means for mounting the connector holder at a second location in the housing. The first location is adjacent to a connector access opening defined in the housing. The second location is recessed *within the housing* relative to the first location. The connector holder can be mounted at either the first or second location. Compare the position of the connector holder in Figures 2 and 5 (showing the connector holder mounted at the first location) with the position of the connector holder in Figure 11 (showing the connector holder mounted at the second location). Mounting the connector holder at the second, recessed location affords greater protection to the connectors. *See e.g.*, page 8, lines 24-26.

Robinson fails to disclose or suggest an outlet box including a housing having a second location for mounting a connector holder that is recessed within the housing relative to a first location for mounting a connector holder. Rather, *Robinson* discloses an outlet box including a mounting frame for mounting multiple modules 34. The modules 34 are mounted side-by-side in the mounting frame. *See e.g.*, column 5, lines 25-37 and Figs. 1 and 3. None of these modules

34 are recessed *within the housing* relative to the other modules. Rather, all of the modules 34 are defined within a wall of the housing. Furthermore, no motivation is given in *Robinson* for mounting a connector holder at a recessed location in the housing.

Moreover, Applicants note that the rejection does not even argue that *Robinson* discloses a second location for mounting a connector holder that is recessed within the housing relative to a first location for mounting a connector holder. Rather, the claim feature of a *recessed* mounting location appears to be ignored. Applicants respectfully point out "[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every claim element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." See *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987) and MPEP § 2131 (page 2100-73). *Robinson* does not disclose, either expressly or inherently a second mounting location recessed within the housing relative to a first mounting location. For at least these reasons, *Robinson* does not anticipate claim 32

Claim 33 recites, in part, a method for assembling an outlet box including a housing, which includes a first and second connector mounting location. The second connector mounting location is recessed within the housing relative to the first connector mounting location. The method includes selecting one of the first and second mounting locations and mounting a connector holder to the selected location. Applicants respectfully point out that the connector mounting locations 86, 88 noted in the rejection are both defined by the same wall of the housing and, therefore, cannot be recessed within the housing relative to one another. *Robinson* does not anticipate claim 33, therefore, for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 32.

Claim 34 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing defining a connector access opening and a connector holder. The outlet box further includes a first and second connector holder mount. The second connector holder mount is positioned at a second location in the housing recessed relative to a first location. The connector holder can be mounted to either of these connector holder mounts. For at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claims 32 and 33, therefore, *Robinson* does not anticipate claim 34.

Claims 1-6, 12, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over *Robinson* in view of *Prazoff* (U.S. 6,077,109, hereinafter "*Prazoff*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, an outlet box including a housing and a connector holder. The housing includes a first side positioned opposite from a second side. The housing further includes a peripheral wall extending between the first and second sides and having a first portion and a second portion, each portion having an outer face. The outer face of the first portion is planar and defines a connector access opening and extends between first and second edges of the housing. The outer face of the second portion, which is separate from the outer face of the first portion, is configured to curve continuously about a periphery of the housing from the first edge to the second edge.

As noted by the Examiner, *Robinson* fails to disclose or suggest a second outer face of a peripheral wall being shaped to curve continuously about a periphery of a housing. The rejection cites *Prazoff* as disclosing a peripheral wall shaped to curve continuously about a periphery of the housing. However, *Prazoff* does not suggest a peripheral wall being broken into a first portion and a second portion, with only the second portion curving continuously. Rather the entire peripheral wall in *Prazoff* is configured to curve continuously. Furthermore, *Prazoff* fails to disclose or suggest any motivation for breaking the continuity of the peripheral wall. The connector holder disclosed in *Prazoff* is located on one of the sides of the housing and not on the peripheral wall.

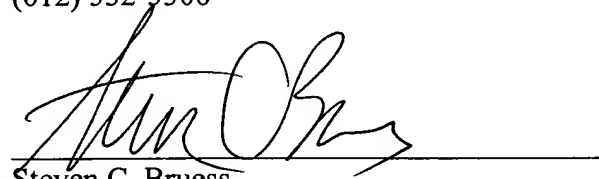
Moreover, the reasons found in *Prazoff* for configuring the peripheral wall to curve continuously do not exist in *Robinson*. The peripheral wall of the extension socket body in *Prazoff* is curved so as to allow an electrical plug to be wound up following the shape of the housing. In contrast, *Robinson* includes fiber optic cable, which is wound around storage rings, and which does not follow the shape of the housing. Therefore, for at least these reasons, *Robinson* would not lead a person having skill in the art to the invention of claim 1, even in view of *Prazoff*. Claims 2-6, 12, and 13 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Bruess", is written over a horizontal line.

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